

The Critic

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Published weekly, at Nos. 18 & 20 Astor Place, by

THE GOOD LITERATURE PUBLISHING CO.

Entered as Second-Class Mail-Matter at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y.

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 13, 1884.

AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY general agents. Single copies sold, and subscriptions taken, by Chas. Scribner's Sons, G. P. Putnam's Sons, Taintor Bro's, Merrill & Co., E. P. Dutton & Co., Brentano, and the principal news-dealers in the city. Boston: Cupples, Upham & Co. (Old Corner Book-store.) Philadelphia: John Wanamaker. Washington: Brentano Brothers. Chicago: Pierce & Snyder, and Brentano Bros. New Orleans: George F. Wharton, 5 Carondelet Street. London: B. F. Stevens, 4 Trafalgar Square. Paris: Galignani's, 224 Rue de Rivoli. Rome: Office of the *Nuova Antologia*.

The Hawthornes.

THE MERITS and demerits of Mr. Julian Hawthorne's biography of his father and mother, which has just left the press of J. R. Osgood & Co., must be determined by abler pens than mine. I have read his two volumes with great care, and have found them very interesting, as I knew I should before I began them, partly because Mr. Hawthorne is a very able writer, but more, I suspect, because I have always admired his father so heartily. Knowing him a little when I was a young man, he was never to me the shy recluse that he has been so often painted by others—grave, gloomy, taciturn,—but a genial, kindly, courteous, fine-mannered gentleman. How great he was as a writer, I knew: what a self-contained, strong, wise, manly man he was, I know now through the biography of his son, which is so temperately written, so free from filial enthusiasm, and so consistent throughout, that it authenticates itself at once. Unlike many of his guild who are nothing if they are not literary, Hawthorne was larger than his books. But upon this point let me quote a few lines from his son: 'Few men, who have made literature the business of their lives, have been less dependent than Hawthorne upon literature for a character. If he had never written a line, he would still have possessed, as a human being, scarcely less interest and importance than he does now. Those who were most intimate with him not only found in him all the promise of his works, but they found enough more to put the works quite in the background. His literary phase seemed a phase only, and not the largest or most characteristic. In the same way, when he was a consul at Liverpool, nobody could have been a better consul than he; but when you came into his presence, the consul was lost sight of, and the man shone out.'

It has fallen to the lot of but few men of genius to have a temperament like Hawthorne's, which if not a joyous one was not a gloomy one, and was equal to good as well as evil fortunes. If he inherited anything from his Puritan ancestry, it was what was best in it—its seriousness, its steadfastness, its granite-like strength. His genius was imaginative and creative, the most so of any American writer with whom I am familiar, with the single exception, perhaps, of Poe, whose work was generally inferior to his, in that it was less healthy and sane, and that it leaves an impression of ghastliness rather than of beauty. Earlier than Poe by a year or more in the field of imaginative story-telling, the creations of Hawthorne attracted but little attention outside the circle of his intimate friends, while the miscreations of Poe were lauded to the skies. Mr. S. G. Goodrich's annual, *The Token*, ushered into the unobservant world, in the volumes for 1832 and 1833, seven of Hawthorne's most characteristic tales—'Wives of the Dead,' 'My Kinsman, Major Molineux,' 'Roger Malvern's Burial,'

'The Gentle Boy,' 'The Seven Vagabonds,' 'Sir William Pepperell,' and 'The Canterbury Pilgrims.' Poe's earliest printed tale, 'MS. Found in a Bottle,' appeared in the Baltimore *Saturday Visitor* in 1833. Tracing Hawthorne and Poe from this latter date to the close of 1836, I find that the former contributed thirteen tales and sketches to *The Token* and *The New England Magazine*—i.e., 'The Story Teller,' 'Visit to Niagara Falls,' 'Old News,' 'Young Goodman Brown,' 'The Ambitious Guest,' 'Graves and Goblins,' 'The Old Maid in the Winding Sheet,' 'Sketches from Memory,' 'The Devil in Manuscript,' 'The Village Uncle,' 'Alice Doane's Appeal,' 'The Haunted Mind' and 'The Man of Adamant,' and that Poe contributed nearly the same number of tales and sketches to *The Southern Literary Messenger*—i.e., 'Berenice,' 'Morella,' 'Lionizing,' 'Hans Phaall,' 'The Visionary,' 'Bon Bon,' 'Loss of Breath,' 'King Peot,' 'Metzingerstein,' 'Duc de l'Omelette,' 'Epimanes,' and 'A Tale of Jerusalem.' Writing a memoir of Poe, four or five years ago, I could not but contrast the sensation which he excited from the beginning with the long neglect which Hawthorne experienced, and which kept him 'for a good many years the obscurest man-of-letters in America.' Why the one created so great an impression and the other no impression at all is as singular as that Willis should have been thought the most gifted of all the writers of the time.

'What do you think of my becoming an author, and relying for support upon my pen?' So Hawthorne wrote to his mother in his seventeenth year. 'I think the illegibility of my handwriting is very author-like. How proud you would feel to see my works praised by the reviewers, as equal to the proudest productions of the scribbling sons of John Bull. But authors are always poor devils, and therefore may Satan take them.' Mr. Hawthorne has not been able to tell us much concerning the early literary life of his father, though his first volume leaves nothing to be desired in regard to his early life in general, which by the help of manuscript documents, letters, and the like, is told at great length—at too great length, many of his readers may think. He has received several letters from editors to whom Hawthorne sent his contributions, among others three or four from the editor and publisher of *The Token*, who offers him \$35 for the privilege of inserting 'The Gentle Boy' in that flourishing annual! Six or seven years later he writes him again to inform him that *The Token* is out, and that the publisher owes him \$108 for what he has written. 'Shall it be sent you?' The vaticinations of the young Hawthorne had proved true: 'authors are always poor devils'—and Satan, it is to be feared, takes a great many of them, almost always, in fact, those who begin their career, as Poe did, with 'MS. Found in a Bottle!' I doubt whether Hawthorne was ever well paid (as literary payment is understood now), even in the fulness of his fame. I remember his telling me one day that Bentley had just offered him ten guineas a sheet, which I thought a good price until he informed me that in this case a sheet meant sixteen printed pages. Think of the author of 'The Scarlet Letter' being offered a trifle over three dollars a page for a story or a novel! But Poe was willing—if not eager—to write at that price per page, a year or two before his death, in *The Southern Literary Messenger*, which would have perished in its infancy but for his stories; and Bryant, when he began to write in *The United States Literary Gazette*, was content to receive two dollars apiece for his poems!

I had, and have, a great deal to say about Mr. Hawthorne's biography, but I must leave it unsaid, since it augments with every word I write. What I must say, however, is, that it increases my admiration for the character of Hawthorne, which was as tenacious of affection

as of principle, and my respect for his genius as an author. What he was in his published books we all know; what he was in his letters and in the unpublished portions of his journals, we know now for the first time. His English was not merely the most beautiful that ever was written, but when he willed it to be so—which was but seldom—it was painful in its intense power. Let me quote two short passages from his Roman journal: 'But she was a person anxious to try all things, and fill up her experience in all directions: she had a strong and coarse nature, which she had done her utmost to refine, with infinite pains; but of course it could only be superficially changed.' 'It was such an awful joke, that she should have resolved—in all sincerity, no doubt—to make herself the greatest, wisest, best woman of the age. And to that end she set to work on her strong, heavy, unpliant, and, in many respects, defective and evil nature, and adorned it with a mosaic of admirable qualities, such as she chose to possess; putting in here a splendid talent, and there a moral excellence, and polishing each separate piece, and the whole together, till it seemed to shine and dazzle all who saw it. She took credit to herself for having been her own Redeemer, if not her own Creator; and, indeed, she was far more a work of art than any of Mozier's statues.' Few of us would care to sit to the man who could dash off a portrait like that.

R. H. STODDARD.

Reviews

Bryant's Prose Writings.*

THE earliest date represented by Mr. Bryant's prose in these two volumes of books is 1825, the latest is 1878. The selections therefore cover a period of fifty-three years, and they traverse a range of subjects and interests quite as wide as that covered by the half century. From Wordsworth and his school of native poetry to Mazzini and the revolutionary cabals of Italy—what a field over which to lead the sympathies of a literary man! In action there could be no greater diversity than that represented by these two men; and yet there was a common bond between the two, which Bryant's position sufficiently indicated. The poet is two-sided, and, in sympathy at least, can bridge the chasm between a meditative life and one of extreme action. Bryant passed early from his native woods to the wilds of Wall Street, and got back no nearer to the wilderness than that 'pomp of cultivated nature' spread out along his peaceful bay at Roslyn; but between his sympathies and his duties, he at least, knew the road betwixt Wordsworth and Mazzini. His early life was spent by the trout streams of Western Massachusetts, and his latter years brought him almost under the roar of the Elevated Railroad. So, too, in his daily round of work, he was incessantly passing from the company of the poets to that of the politicians; advocating Free Trade to-day, to-morrow helping to found an Academy of Design; telling the wonders of the Atlantic Cable in the evening, and in the morning buried in the stillest recesses of Roslyn, meditating a poem on the delights of horticulture; to-day with Homer and his heroes in Asia Minor, to-morrow writing a leader for his metropolitan journal on 'Slam, Bang & Co.'

But while a man may have two sides to present to the public, the solid substance of himself lies between the two; he fills the space in some fashion betwixt his two semblances. How Mr. Bryant does this is indicated in the wide variety of pieces selected from his voluminous writings. The purely literary extracts, on poetry and the poets, fill about a hundred and fifty pages. They are, in the main, early lectures and later essays, and show the poet and critic. Five out of some ten or fif-

teen early stories contributed to *The Talisman* and other periodicals show how wisely Mr. Bryant chose in leaving the field of ingenious story-manufacture to Poe and Hawthorne, to Paulding and Miss Sedgwick. Sketches of travel in the West, Northwest, and 'Old South,' in Cuba, Mexico, and Europe, make another hundred and fifty pages of good description. But Bryant was a somewhat commonplace traveller, who, while he looked with a poet's interest on nature, remembered his commercial readers, and kept the poetry back for better uses. He has a good deal of curiosity for incident, humor, scenery, pioneer habits and characteristics, and puts the reader in possession of these, making the mind richer in picture and information, but not quickening it much or lifting it greatly. Bayard Taylor, with his larger sympathy and heart, would have made us richer and given us broader pictures; Washington Irving would have brought out the grouping in more vigorous and shining lines; Edward Everett, who could be eloquent in description when he chose that field, would have impressed us with the grand features of scenery. Bryant lacked both enthusiasm and eloquence, so that we are left with an accurate picture, drawn with reserve, with some happy touches, but without that felicitous command of the element which supplies what we call atmosphere. For that command he required time and an audience of poets.

But passing from the Sketches of Travel to the thirty-three Occasional Addresses and Commemorative Discourses, which the editor has selected as specimens of what Bryant did on the platform and at special literary gatherings, we find the poetic imagination more generous. The finest of these discourses belong to his later years, when he cultivated the art of speaking and attained a most graceful expression, and when, moreover, he spoke with the assured tone of a national representative, acquainted with all the walks of literature, and versed as well in the history of men and measures. He had a sufficient command of all subjects to establish his claim to be heard on them, a sufficient acquaintance with all literature to give him control of the largest illustration, and, with a freer play of the constructive imagination than he allowed himself in newspaper writing, he never failed of getting the ear of his audience, and seldom failed of gratifying it. And what a variety of topics he touched! The Electric Telegraph and its history, the Struggle of Hungary for Freedom, the Unity of Italy, Horticulture, Academies of Art, Municipal Reform, Darwin's theories, Music in the Public Schools, Irving, Halleck, Homer, Free Trade, the Newspaper Press, Goethe, and Shakspeare—all gave him themes which he made instructive and attractive. Other orators of the table have been equally graceful and more witty; but how many have kept the wit and the eloquence so well for an ornament of the deeper and more abiding thought?

Mr. Traill's "Coleridge."*

FOR the first time we have a complete Life of Coleridge—or, rather, a biography covering the whole period of his life. As such, Mr. Traill's sketch—for it is in reality little more—is of great importance. He has given a trustworthy account of Coleridge's life, filled up the gaps in it left by other biographers, and helped us to see what sort of man he really was. Much that the lovers of Coleridge would gladly have had given in detail has necessarily been omitted or compressed into the smallest space. Some parts of his correspondence would have added much to an understanding of the man. Many illustrative anecdotes and sayings might well have been admitted had space allowed. Mr.

* Prose Writings of William Cullen Bryant. Edited by Parks Godwin. \$6. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

* Coleridge. By H. D. Traill. (English Men-of-Letters.) 75 cents. New York: Harper & Bros.

Traill's book gives a consistent and a connected view of the poet's life, and has been the result of personal researches. All lovers of Coleridge will receive the book thankfully; but they must feel that it does not lessen their desire for a biography more philosophical and complete. They will not be likely to complain that Mr. Traill has spoken freely of Coleridge's faults and pointed out the exact nature of them. They do not admire the man's treatment of his family, or offer any apologies for the debasement of his own great faculties. That a dozen years of his life, those which ought to have yielded the largest results, are worse than a blank, through the use of opium, they know very well, and do not care to deny. This ought to be said as plainly as Mr. Traill has said it, as a warning, and for the sake of truth. It is not this, therefore, which will disappoint them, but the fact that Mr. Traill does not recognize the real place of Coleridge as a thinker. He has very plainly stated Coleridge's faults, but he has not done justice to his merits. He denies to him an important influence on the thought and life of his time, which is to misapprehend him and to misrepresent his work. His poetry is adequately analyzed and praised, but his philosophical writings are passed by with but slight notice. This is perhaps not to be complained of in a literary biography; but a failure to recognize Coleridge as an influence on his time and on the present time is quite to misjudge him and wholly to misunderstand him. The number of his readers is small, he has no popular following, he was not the founder of a school; but, for all that, he deserves a much higher recognition as a thinker than Mr. Traill has given him. Sad to contemplate as his life was, disconnected and unsatisfactory as his works are, his influence has been a pervading and an effective one, reaching many of the best minds of the time, and working out currents of thought by no means stilled as yet.

Doubtless a work like this is all there is a demand for at present, for Coleridge is not, and is never likely to become, popular. Perhaps with the single failure above noted, Mr. Traill has done justice to him and given an adequate account of his life. His book will in some degree help to revive an interest in one of the most interesting of English authors, and it may lead at least a few to turn to his own account of his life in his 'Biographia Literaria.' If it sends any of its readers to Harper's admirable edition of Coleridge's works, in seven volumes, it will do a good service. That Mr. Traill has done no such service for Coleridge as Mr. Myers did for Wordsworth, in his clear and concise statement of his teachings, is to be regretted; but he has written a biography which, on the whole, is one of the best in the English Men-of-Letters Series. It deserves this credit for its plainness and honesty of statement, for its excellent account of Coleridge's poetry, and for its interest as a narrative.

'Browning's New Book, "Ferishtah's Fancies."'

BROWNING is his own best apologist, and the Prologue to 'Ferishtah's Fancies' quite reconciles one to the unpalatable quality, not of the fancies themselves, but of the form in which some of them are bodied forth. It tells you how ortolans are roasted and served in Italy. First comes a bit of toast, then a sage-leaf, and then 'the birdling':

Now, were there only crust to crunch, you'd wince:
Unpalatable!
Sage-leaf is bitter-pungent—so's a quince:
Eat each who's able!
But through all three bite boldly—lo, the gust!

And the poet, in preparing his dish, not of birds but of

songs, has not disdained to practise the arts of the cook:

So with your meal, my poem: masticate
Sense, sight and song there!
Digest these, and I praise your peptics' state,
Nothing found wrong there.

The new poem—for the connection of the parts is close enough to warrant us in regarding the whole work as a single poem—is divided into twelve sections, each of the last ten containing a parable with which Dervish Ferishtah illustrates some wholesome truth. The parables in the first two sections are not related by, but of, Ferishtah, who is as yet 'un-dervished'—a pupil still, but soon to become a teacher, though he never ceases to be a seeker-after as well as an expounder of the truth. All of these parables are in blank verse—the first few, brief, pointed, picturesque, easy to grasp; the twelfth, as knotty a bit of moralizing, as rugged a bit of versification, as one is likely to meet with in half-a-century's reading of English poetry. After each parable comes a song, embodying the same moral as the unrhymed narrative, but presenting it in a more popular form. And as no poet can be less melodious or more obscure, to the reader of ordinary ear and intellect, than Browning is at times, so there is none living who can rival him, either for sense or sound, in the writing of impassioned lyrics. It was only in the spring of last year that he gave us, in 'Jocoseria,' two of his most exquisite love-songs—outbursts of melody and sentiment that suggested a poet in the prime of life, if not in the first flush of youth; and now, at seventy-two, though he hardly touches the point attained in 'Wanting is—What?' and 'Never the Time and the Place,' he yet reaches a higher level than any of his contemporaries has gained of recent years. Take, for instance, the tail-piece to the parable of 'The Melon-Seller':

Wish no word unspoken, want no look away!
What if words were but mistake, and looks—too sudden, say!
Be unjust for once, Love! Bear it—well I may!

Do me justice always? Bid my heart—their shrine—
Render back its store of gifts, old looks and words of thine—
Oh, so all unjust—the less deserved, the more divine?

Does this sound like the verse of a septuagenarian?—or this, from the eleventh 'fancy'?

Ask not one least word of praise!
Words declare your eyes are bright?
What then meant that summer day's
Silence spent in one long gaze?
Was my silence wrong or right?
Words of praise were all to seek!
Face of you and form of you,
Did they find the praise so weak
When my lips just touched your cheek—
Touch which let my soul come through?

When a man can write like this at Browning's age, it would hardly be surprising if he should do his best work at eighty. It would be difficult, however, for him, or for any one else, to excel the versification of the following stanza:

Eyes shall meet eyes and find no eyes between,
Lips feed on lips, no other lips to fear!
No past, no future—so thine arms but screen
The present from surprise! not there, 'tis here—
Not then, 'tis now:—back, memories that intrude!
Make, Love, the universe our solitude,
And, over all the rest, oblivion roll—
Sense quenching soul!

The recent revival, if not the first awakening, of American interest in Persian poetry, caused by the publication of Vedder's edition of the 'Rubaiyat,' may perhaps ensure a sympathetic reception for 'Ferishtah's Fancies' in quarters where it might not otherwise have become known.

* 'Ferishtah's Fancies. By Robert Browning. \$1. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Some Holiday Publications.

It will be a long time before Tennyson's Poems will cease to be given as holiday presents in English and American homes. Their charm is perennial, and the demand for them would seem to be unabated. Shortly after the Laureate's new publishers (Macmillan & Co.) had issued the one-volume edition of his works—a marvel of cheapness and beauty—they began to print a seven-volume set, which is now completed. Of these the first two contain the miscellaneous poems, the third the 'Idylls of the King,' the fourth 'The Princess' and 'Maud,' the fifth 'Enoch Arden' and 'In Memoriam,' and the sixth 'Queen Mary' and 'Harold.' The seventh and last volume, just issued, gives us 'The Lover's Tale,' etc. In the matter of typography, this new edition of these modern classics is worthy of all praise. The large, clear letterpress, and the broad margin of the untrimmed sheets, are a delight to the eye accustomed to the narrow pages and condensed type of cheap reprints of the standard poets. Dark green bindings, protected by temporary covers of gray paper lettered in brown, entitle this library edition to a place on the shelf reserved for books of real value, and whose exterior is worthy of their contents. Single copies are sold for \$1.75, but a small edition has been printed on hand-made paper, and can be purchased only in sets, the price being \$24.50.

MESSRS. ROUTLEDGE have issued a new and much improved edition of their 'Library of Familiar Quotations.' The work is in five volumes, the first four of which are edited by the Rev. Cranford Tait Ramage, LL.D. These are the volumes devoted to the Greek authors, the Latin, the French and Italian, and the German and Spanish. They differ widely from the 'Familiar Quotations' with which American readers are most familiar—the invaluable Bartlett, now in its eighth edition; for they give, not simply the words and phrases that are supposed to be on everybody's lips and pen, but the 'elegant extracts' ('Beautiful Thoughts,' Dr. Ramage calls them) which one is less likely to find quoted in ordinary writing or conversation, but which would strike him most forcibly in reading the work from which the compiler has taken them. Thus a whole volume is given up to the famous Greeks, from 'Homerus' down to Longinus, each extract being followed by a prose translation by the editor. The arrangement of the book is alphabetical by authors' names, and a very brief sketch of each poet's or philosopher's career precedes the selections from his writings. There is an alphabetical and a chronological index to authors' names, and a copious index to the subject-matter. A similar method has been followed in the preparation of the Latin volume, a noteworthy omission being that of Marcus Aurelius. In this—and also in the German and Spanish book, we believe—the translations are furnished by Dr. Ramage, who has also rendered the French and Italian quotations, with the exception of those from Ariosto and Tasso. The only volume in this excellent library edited by another hand is that which contains quotations from the greatest writers of all lands and periods. This was originally compiled by J. C. Grocott; and Miss Anna L. Ward, co-editor of the 'Cyclopædia of Practical Quotations,' has enhanced its value on this side of the Atlantic by providing it with an appendix filled with quotations from American authors. The arrangement of this volume is alphabetical by subjects.

SHAKESPEARE'S 'Romeo and Juliet,' illustrated by F. Dicksee, A. R. A., is to be reckoned among the finest of the many magnificent holiday volumes produced this season. It has a valuable introduction by Edward Dowden, LL.D., and in size and general make-up is calculated to fill a place on the shelves devoted to the most important volumes of a large library. The illustrations are, in part, large plates obtained by a photographic process from Mr. Dicksee's paintings, and, in part, smaller but equally finished impressions in the text. They give every stroke of the brush of the originals, which are uniformly of the highest order of merit as illustrations. (Cassell & Co. \$25.) Mr. Dowden's introduction traces the history of the story of the lovers from Masuccio through Da Porto's version, in which it had become a prose poem of the Italian Renaissance. In almost every essential, and in many details, he shows that Da Porto's novel agrees with Shakespeare's play, while in the death-scene it is finer than the version followed by the great dramatist. This seems to be the English poem of Arthur Brooke—'The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet,' itself taken from a French 'Histoire Tragique' by Pierre Boiastuan. The other transmutations of the story in English, French, Spanish and Italian hands, later in date than Shakespeare's drama, are treated of; and, finally, Shakespeare's treatment, the moral, the note of doom, and the art of

the play. Of Mr. Dicksee's illustrations, the frontispiece shows the balcony scene; the street-brawl in Scene I. is illustrated by a very cleverly composed picture printed in the text; the ball-room scene furnishes the artist with a subject of which he has made one of the most agreeable drawings imaginable. The drawing of Friar Lawrence is one that shows the superiority of the photoprint to other forms of reproduction for work of this class. It would have lost almost all its force if engraved by hand. That Mr. Dicksee has studied Italian life and architecture in Italy is proved by the very simple but very lifelike picture of the lovers departing with the Friar to be married, and by the next illustration, which shows Mercutio's death. Americans will think that Mrs. Gilbert might have posed for the nurse in the picture of her confab with Juliet in Act IV, Scene III. The last scene—that which has been done over and over again by the most celebrated of modern painters in every country—is a severe test of Mr. Dicksee's originality, and one from which he issues triumphantly. A number of very well-engraved head- and tail-pieces ornament the text.

'MILTON'S PROSE WRITINGS' have been added to the Appletons' Parchment Library—not in their entirety, but in a compact little volume of selections made with a view to exhibit the spirit and style of Milton's essays, rather than set forth his peculiar opinions on matters of Church, of State, or of domestic life. These extracts have been skilfully chosen to this end; and they are prefaced by an exceedingly readable and well-written essay by Ernest Myers. Of the English poets who have written good prose, Milton is the only one whose work in this kind has 'preserved any considerable power;' and 'even his,' Mr. Myers thinks, 'would have been forgotten, but for its relation to his poetry.' Certain it is, that one who was not an ardent admirer of his verse would never be tempted to read, for pleasure at least, the 'Apology for Smectymnus,' 'Eikonoklastes,' 'Tetrachordon,' or 'Areopagitica'—which last fills more than a quarter of this slender volume. And even a lover of 'Lycidas,' 'Comus' and the 'Nativity,' if not of 'Samson' and the two 'Paradises,' might be given pause by the second sentence in these selections—a sentence containing, if our count be correct, just three hundred and seventy-five words, compound and simple. And yet one will find here such masterly sentence-building and such sustained flights of imaginative eloquence as will reward him richly for the somewhat arduous labor of reading these treatises from end to end.

THE LINGUIST who has learned to speak glibly a dozen modern tongues, and yet has failed to master the ancient language of the flowers, lacks something of a perfect education. To remedy his defect, he should give his days and nights to the study of the dainty volume in which Miss Greenaway has demonstrated for the hundredth time her delicacy of fancy and cleverness in handling the draughtsman's pencil. ('Language of Flowers,' \$1.25. George Routledge & Sons). Every page holds a landscape or interior, with figures; and wherever there is room for it, a bud, leaf, blossom, shrub, or wreath of flowers, appears in the margin, forming a running accompaniment to the printed text. The names of the flowers and of the qualities or circumstances for which they stand are given in two lists, one arranged alphabetically by flowers and the other by qualities. Burns's 'Red, Red Rose,' Shelley's 'Sensitive Plant,' and other favorite poems relating to plants and flowers, form an appendix to the little book.

'RED LETTER POEMS' (Thos. Y. Crowell & Co.) is a new collection of English verse, in the making of which the aim has been to include such poems as are acknowledged to be among the best works of the authors represented, so as to form a compact handbook of English poetry from the time of Chaucer to the present day. A number of poems by living authors bring the work down to the present day, and biographical data from Johnson's 'Cyclopædia,' Allibone's 'Dictionary of Authors,' etc., make the volume a good book of reference. It is handsomely printed on cream-tinted paper with red-lined borders, and bound in green and gold, with bevelled edges. In similar style are gotten up D. G. Rossetti's 'Poems,' which includes a fragment now for the first time published, and entitled 'The Bride's Prelude.' Part I. of this new poem—which was an early production—is complete, and consists of 184 stanzas of five lines each. 'Miss Mulock's Poems' are also of the series, and Sir Walter Scott's 'Marmion' and 'Lay of the Last Minstrel.' These last are from the latest Edinburgh edition, printed from the author's interleaved copy. In the case of 'Marmion,' the preservation of the original manuscript has enabled the editor to enrich the

work with various readings which will be found curious and instructive by students of the poem.

THOSE LOVERS of the odd and pretty who for years past have been sending Kate Greenaway's Almanack to their friends at the beginning of the year, will not fail to do so this season; or, if they do, it will not be Miss Greenaway's fault; for the clever designs scattered through the Almanack for 1885 are as pretty and as odd as ever. (Routledge. 50 cts.)

'THE Guest-Book,' in which may be recorded the coming and going of guests, with pages for autographs, incidents and sketches (Lee & Shephard. \$3.75) contains, besides the necessary amount of blank paper, neatly lithographed texts, in colors, from Shakespeare, Lever, Klopstock, and what may be called a full line of quotable writers. There is, too, a number of pretty chromos, after drawings by Annie F. Cox, author of 'Baby's Kingdom,' and the volume is bound in bronzed cloth and put up in an imitation alligator-skin box.

'THE DIARY AND CORRESPONDENCE OF SAMUEL PEPPYS, ESQ.,' recently issued by Dodd, Mead & Company (10 vols. \$15), is the only work of the kind, in English, which is worthy of being put beside Evelyn's Diary. As the late Sir Arthur Helps has said, it is one of the truest books ever written. Its author was a man whose tastes and occupations led him into almost every walk of life, and the period when he lived was one of the most interesting that England has passed through. It is no wonder, therefore, that his book should be a favorite with readers of the kind who like to make the acquaintance of truths that are stranger than fiction—a class that includes all writers and hosts of other people. The original manuscript being in a kind of shorthand at times, made to serve as a cipher, and complicated by passages being occasionally in Latin or French, the first deciphering of it, by Lord Grenville and Mr. Smith, the basis of Lord Braybrooke's editions, was not accomplished without errors; and certain passages more obscure than the rest were left undeciphered. The editor of the present edition, the Rev. Mynors Bright, who prepared himself by learning the cipher used by Pepys out of the volume in the Pepysian Library, has managed to clear up all doubtful readings, and to decipher those that puzzled the original translators. Most of these latter portions were, however, found to be unfit for publication, so that the gain to the reader in the present edition is principally that he has an authentic text. The Life of Pepys by Lord Braybrooke is preserved, and there are plenty of notes and a very full index. The work is printed on good paper, in fine, clear type, and is neatly bound in red cloth.

ALWAYS fresh and sparkling are the merry 'Ingoldsby Legends' in whatever shape they come to us. This season we are fortunate in being able to welcome 'The Lay of St. Aloys' on large illuminated pages, quaintly printed in antique characters, and thickly bestrewn with quips and cranks of artistic fancy from title-page to finis. (E. & J. B. Young & Co. \$4.50) In addition to full-page illustrations and vignettes, odd conceits in black, white, red or brown are discovered lurking between every line, and springing up in unexpected corners. The artist who has brought to pass these delightful drolleries is Mr. Ernest M. Jessop, and it would be hard to find a more clever illustrator of the woes of

A wretch kept in durance all night
By a horrid dead gentleman holding him tight.

THE George MacDonald Calendar (White, Stokes & Allen) presents us with a very blonde version of the familiar face of the author of 'Robert Falconer,' 'Wilfrid Cumbermede' and 'Sir Gebbie.' The emblematic decorations include a cluster of pear-blossoms, an hour-glass, a censor and a lighted torch.—'A Ruskin Time and Tide' (John Wiley & Sons) is a pretty arrangement of calendars for each month of 1885, with decorated covers. Each calendar has an appropriate illustration for the month in color, and the opposite pages contain admirable selections from Ruskin's 'Modern Painters.'

CHATEAUBRIAND's famous story of 'Atala,' and the scarcely less well-known illustrations by Doré, presented in a new English edition with a cover of blue and gold, will no doubt prove as successful as any former edition. (Cassell & Co. \$5.) It is unnecessary to speak at length of these plates, which contain some of the finest work of Doré, who was, all things considered, one of the most remarkable artists of our century. The text and illustrations of this edition are introduced by a particularly interesting and well written essay by Mr. Edward J. Harding.

ONE of the most charming gift-books of the season is 'Among the Daisies,' edited by E. B. (American Publishing Co., Hartford). Accustomed as we have been to the sight of beautiful book-covers, we should be tempted to buy this book for its exterior alone, determined, whatever its contents might prove, to have the pleasure of owning or giving away such a bit of delightful daintiness. As a matter of fact, however, one finds on opening the volume that its contents are worthy of their casing. It is not a child's book, though it contains some daisy poems written for children; but, containing also Chaucer's 'Flower and Leaf,' with the familiar poems or lines of Wordsworth, Milton, Burns, Campbell, Spenser and Herrick, as well as dainty verses from recent authors, it is really a beautiful little encyclopædia of the pretty things that have been said about daisies. The idea of the Marguerite has been carried out in everything, even to the printing of the table of contents on daisy petals, with the glorious 'Day's Eye' of the universe just hinted at on one cover, while the 'wee, modest, crimson-tipp'd flowers' of the English meadows bloom in beautiful profusion on the other.

'BEACON-LIGHTS,' compiled and illustrated by Elizabeth N. Little (Boston: Cassino), is one of the most attractive of the dainty little volumes, half book, half Christmas card, which are such a feature of the holiday publications this year. It has a silver cover, and the illustrations are all nautical, even to the fancy lettering of twisted cordage, while the light-houses are illustrations of the genuine beacons at Portsmouth, Boston, Minot Ledge, Cape Ann, etc. Each page contains a text and verses, with pages to fill a month, and the selections are in excellent taste.

'FROM GREENLAND'S ICY MOUNTAINS'—Heber's familiar verses, with twenty illustrations by Frederic B. Schell—is attractively brought out by Porter & Coates. It makes a delicate and beautiful little book, though the cover would have been prettier if plainer, and some of the illustrations are very fine, especially the head of Christ, after Guido. Many of them are illustrations of only a single line, and the general effect is very pleasing.

'WHEEL-SONGS,' by S. Conant Foster, illustrated (\$1.76, White, Stokes & Allen), is a collection of 'Poems of Bicycling.' It is pretty good, some things in it being very good, but one feels as if it might have been just a little bit better. The adaptation of the bicycle to practical purposes is almost unlimited, and offers a wide field for fiction as well as fact; but the poem alluding to its uses in visiting the cemetery seems just a little strained, and a note to the effect that the occurrence was an actual fact does not have the solemnity for the reader that it evidently had for the author.

AMONG Porter & Coates' holiday books the palm will perhaps be given to their edition of Tennyson's 'Lady Clare,' elegantly illustrated by Fredericks, Granville Perkins and Harry Fenn. Mr. Fredericks' fancy portrait of the heroine, Mr. Schell's landscape vignettes, and Mr. Fenn's floral designs would add a grace to any poem. They are in a style peculiarly appropriate to Tennyson's muse.

THE NUTSHELL SERIES is truly a happy thought. A half-dozen little volumes in old gold contain the best sayings of the greatest wits, philosophers, epigrammatists and moralists. They are packed in a little silver case, which may be carried about in the pocket of an overcoat. The selections are made by Helen Kendrick Johnson, and the collection is published by G. P. Putnam's Sons. (\$3.)

WALTON'S 'Complete Angler' will never be out of date, but will be read eagerly from generation to generation, by thousands who have never cast a line. Major's edition (New York: Crowell & Co. \$2.), based upon the fourth London edition, is perhaps the best. It contains an introductory essay by the editor, the author's dedication and address, a fac-simile of the original title, portraits and autographs of Walton and Cotton, all the vignettes and other illustrations of older editions, and a number of new illustrations after drawings by John Absolon.

'THE CATHOLIC FAMILY ANNUAL' for 1885 (Catholic Publication Society Co.) contains calendars for every month in the year, and is full of information about all matters relating to the Church. It is illustrated with portraits of prominent priests and bishops, and with other woodcuts.

"THE ENCHIRIDION OF WIT" contains the best specimens of English conversational wit, arranged in periods. It is an example of good printing and of good taste in the make-up. (J. B. Lippincott & Co. \$1.50).—That standard work, Dr. Wm. Smith's 'Bible Dictionary,' has been revised and edited by J. N. and M. A. Peloubet and is published in a Teacher's Edition, with some abridgments but many important additions, by Porter & Coates. (\$2.) This edition has many hundred illustrations, all of them good and useful, and is so cram-full of matter that the customary design on the cover is replaced by a map of Palestine. A pretty full atlas of colored maps is found at the end of the volume.

THE 'HANDBOOK of the Dominion of Canada,' prepared at the request of the Citizen's Committee of the British Association, for the enlightenment of the visiting members, appears to be an admirable guide-book for the average tourist. Its special scientific features are good geological and other maps, and essays by authorities like Mr. A. T. Drummond, who writes on Forestry and on the Botany of Labrador, and Dr. George M. Dawson, who writes on the Geology of the Intercolonial Railway, etc. These essays are written in a style which will be appreciated by the unscientific reader, and they contain many new and interesting facts.

Books for the Young.

'HEIDI' is recommended to a buyer, if not to the reader, by the fact that the profits of its sale are devoted solely to the benefit of the kindergarten department of the Blind Asylum at South Boston. It is a noble charity, and the book is worthy of so good a cause. It is translated by a well-known Boston lady of large philanthropy, and sold by Cupples, Upham & Co. (\$2.) Johanna Spyri, the author, is a German writer not before introduced to American readers, but enjoying a wide reputation at home as a writer for children. 'Heidi' is a grand book for and about children, full of laughter and tears, fascinating and charming in style. It is a book to be long remembered, as it leaves a delightful sense of refreshing and joyous life behind. Its spirit is good, the characters are skilfully drawn and interesting, and the life described is attractive. Heidi is a child equal to all but the greatest of the child-characters in fiction. She carries sunshine and joy wherever she goes, and yet she is but a simple peasant girl.

THE two great works on the Antiquities of the Jews and the Jewish Wars have been abridged and simplified by William Shepard and published as 'Our Young Folks Josephus.' (J. B. Lippincott & Co. \$2.50.) It is well done, and ought to be within the comprehension and enjoyment of any bright young person. The harder parts have been omitted, and the narrative portions only retained, making a complete history of the Jews from the time of Abraham to the final overthrow of Jerusalem.

'CHILDREN will be delighted with the two large picture-books, one of domestic and the other of wild animals, issued in colored covers by Routledge & Sons. (\$1.75 each.) Here they will meet their old friends the horse and the hog, the cow and the camel, the donkey and the dog, the goat and the guinea-pig, the reindeer and the rabbit; and here, too, they will meet, without fear of danger, their old enemies the lion and the leopard, the crocodile and the kangaroo, the bear and the buffalo, the hyena and the hippopotamus, the wild cat and the Tasmanian wolf. The type in which the descriptions and anecdotes are printed is very large and distinct, and the illustrations which abound in each volume are of a size and color to delight the heart of the zoölogist not yet in his teens.

A SERIES of histories in words of one syllable, by Mrs. Helen W. Pierson, is published by George Routledge & Sons. (\$1 each.) Germany, France, England and the United States are the countries treated of. A great merit of the series is the large, clear type in which the text is printed. We doubt that any child old enough to read and understand the history of his own or any other country needs to have it put into monosyllabic words for him. The title is not rigidly adhered to in these books, indeed, for it is impossible to abbreviate the proper names that occur in the narrative. But we think that in writing for the young it is better to use a longer word wherever the shorter one fails to express the exact meaning to be conveyed, or necessitates an awkward construction of the sentence in which it occurs. The child is not displeased or disheartened at having to refer occasionally to an older brother or a dictionary, while he is thus led to store his memory with words which he is bound to ac-

quire before long, unless he is to remain a child forever. Simple words in everyday use—such as thunder, lightning, happy, sorry, loving, tender, and the like—could be understood by any child who could understand the following sentences: 'It is the mode in Paris to live in flats. Each flat is shut off from the rest, and has all the rooms of which one can have need. There is one great door on the ground floor and a man lives there who sees and knows all who mount the stairs.' Such a description as this is intelligible only to a person who has been in a flat, and is ambiguous and misleading even to him. The illustrations in the 'History of the United States' are the best. Those in the other volumes add little or nothing to their value. Maps are printed on the inside faces of the board covers, and the outsides are embellished with colored designs.

'YOUNG FOLKS' IDEAS,' by Uncle Lawrence, conveys in the form of a story a considerable amount of information in a way to interest children. It is profusely illustrated, and the narrative is carried on in a pleasant manner. Two bright children begin with an attempt at bread-making, and they pass on from that to studies of glass, paper, gold, money, printing, and many other scientific and practical subjects. It is a book which ought to interest many a boy and girl who wishes for something more solid than stories. (Lippincott. \$2.)—'THE ADVENTURES OF TWO CHILDREN' (Dutton & Co.) is a story of a boy of six and a girl of four who run away together and have some strange adventures. The story has a little too much grown-up sarcasm in it for a children's book, but it will amuse even the youngest reader. It is finely illustrated, in a dainty and pretty manner, and makes an admirable holiday book.

WE EXHAUSTED the vocabulary of praise a week ago in describing Miss Booth's translation of Laboulaye's Fairy Tales, published by Harper & Bros. An anonymous but excellent translation of these wonderfully entertaining stories is issued by George Routledge & Sons, with over two hundred illustrations from French cuts. (\$1.50.)

HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH brings out a new 'Zigzag' book (Estes & Lauriat), the journey this time being through Acadia and New France. Those familiar with these books know of their mingling of pictures, narrative, stories and poems, making them delightful reading to all young people. A good deal of information is conveyed in them, and in a manner to awaken a hearty interest in the subject. The journey to the home of Evangeline, and thence to Quebec, Montreal and Toronto, has its many opportunities for mingling history and legend with the narrative. In all respects the book is made as attractive as possible for the youthful reader, and he must be a dull boy who will not read it with the keenest satisfaction.

THE RIGHT to publish 'Chatterbox' has at last been decided in favor of Estes & Lauriat, who issue the volume for 1884 in its usual form. It is one of the most substantial of the children's miscellanies, and is filled with pictures, stories, poems and short sketches. (\$1.25.) For real enjoyment, many a child will go to it in preference to the more elaborate holiday books.

Mr. Whittier and Mrs. Gustafson.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE CRITIC:

My attention has been called to a couple of paragraphs occurring under the heading of The Lounger, in *The Critic* for Oct. 18, from which it appears that Mr. Whittier has been reported as saying that my poem 'Meg, A Pastoral' was 'excelled only by Milton's "Lycidas."' Soon after my book of verse entitled 'Meg, A Pastoral, and Other Poems' was published by Lee & Shepard in 1878, Mr. Whittier wrote to me as follows—I am quoting from the letter itself as it lies before me, dated Amesbury, 12 mo, 24, 1878: 'I have read "Meg" with delight. It is a charming New England Pastoral, very sweet and tender, and musical as the songs of our thrushes and song sparrows.' Small wonder that The Lounger, or any one else in his senses, should fail to understand a comparison between a poem thus described, and Milton's great threnody! But concerning the second poem in my volume, a tribute to William Cullen Bryant, Mr. Whittier's very next words in the same letter, are: 'But the elegy on Bryant! I can

only compare it with Milton's "Lycidas;" it is worthy of any living poet at least.' That such expressions from such a source should have been, and should continue to be, one of the precious inspirations of my life, will not astonish any one who understands how intensely the younger poet desires to deserve the recognition of the elder. I wrote to Mr. Whittier for permission to furnish to certain editors the sentences from his letter, here given, to which he most kindly consented, and the comparison of the Bryant elegy to Milton's 'Lycidas' appeared in the New York *Evening Post*, in Mr. George Cary Eggleston's review of my book. Other journals also included it in their notices of it. I showed Mr. Whittier's letter to Mr. H. M. Alden, the editor of *Harper's Magazine*, and to Mr. Edwin P. Whipple, of Boston, both of whom warmly congratulated me upon it. Mr. Whipple used these words: 'If I had received this letter, I would put it between glass and frame it in gold.' Mr. Clement, of the Boston *Evening Transcript*, and Mr. Whiting, of the *Springfield Republican*, will, I think, also remember the facts, as they were cognizant of them at the time.

Naturally enough, it was not so much to Mr. Whittier as it was to me; and it is not surprising that, some six years after having written it, he should—on being asked the bewildering question whether he had ever made a comparison between 'Lycidas' and 'Meg,' a love-story of the late American War—have quite forgotten the real connection in which he did make the comparison with 'Lycidas.'

I shall be grateful to such American journals as may have copied or alluded to the mistaken version of the matter in *The Critic* if they will release me from the odious position of one accepting spurious praise, by also copying this letter.

LONDON, NOV. 13, 1884. ZADEL BARNES GUSTAFSON.

[On Oct. 11 I said that Mr. Whittier had been accused of comparing 'Meg' with 'Lycidas,' but that I should give him the benefit of the doubt until he should plead guilty to the charge. A week later I stated that I had received a letter from the poet, in which he said that no one could dream of comparing the 'simple, unpretentious poem' with anything of Milton's. I neither made nor intended any reflection upon Mrs. Gustafson's position in the matter. On the contrary, I said that she should pray to be defended from the friends who had circulated the erroneous statement. Since Mrs. Gustafson's note was received, a note has come from Mr. Whittier confirming her statement of the case. THE LOUNGER.]

The Lounger

'AMIDST all this pother about Omar Khayyám—so runs a note that I received the other day—'will you not "lounge" into the remark that the poet whom people really admire in the "Rubáiyát" is not Omar, but Fitzgerald?—a poet as much finer and subtler than Omar as the latter is finer than Hodge the plowboy. Bid anyone take a literal translation of the Persian (it has been done into French), and ask him to point out some of the best of these verses. I trow he'll have, as I had, his labor for his pains. The great man, in this case, is the translator, and not the original. Fitzgerald's adaptations from Calderon are just as fine as these "Rubáiyát," and his translation of the "Agamemnon" comes close up to the original. He was a most remarkable character—eccentric to the last degree. His life (he died only last year) is being written, I believe, by Aldis Wright, of Trinity College, Cambridge.'

I SUPPOSE the next thing we will hear will be that the English illustrated periodicals have suspended publication because of the American invasion. Already *Harper's* and *The Century* and *St. Nicholas* have circulations in that country that few native magazines can get, and now *Harper's Young People* has entered the lists, and already boasts of an English edition of 50,000 copies.

MISS WOOLSON's new story, 'East Angels,' is not to be illustrated, and for this I am very thankful. More stories are spoiled for my reading by illustrations than are helped by them. How does the artist know what sort of looking heroine the author has in his mind? He may have a general idea, but it is more apt than not to be unlike the author's. Who would thank an artist for interfering with his mind's picture of Adam Bede, or Jane Eyre, or in fact of any one of his favorite heroes or heroines? And if the reader resents this interference, how must the author feel about it?

As I was walking under the portico of the Academy of Music, the other night, I met a well-known and venerable ticket-speculator, who wore a huge red rose in his buttonhole. He stopped me to say that he proposed giving a lecture some time in February, and he took occasion to remark at the same time that the ticket-speculating business was good, calling my attention to the rose in his buttonhole, which was an indication of prosperity. 'Not a thing left for to-night,' said he; 'I'm all sold out. This is the way when Patti sings, but there's not a dollar in Nevada. The public want Patti—particularly with Scalchi.' This is a true statement of the case. No one knows what the public want better than the ticket-speculator. It is a shame that Nevada should not draw: she has a beautiful voice, and she sings very well—how well, I am afraid few opera-goers know. But we are a strange people. We don't care to encourage beginners. Give us a singer after she has received the stamp of European approval, and we are satisfied. We want to endorse reputations not make them.

AND THEN a great many of us believe that Patti is paid \$5,000 a night, and that of course heightens our desire to see her. Perhaps if we knew that she didn't receive more than \$2,500, and sometimes less than that—for I understand she gets half the gross receipts—we might be only half as enthusiastic. However, Patti is the greatest singer of our time, and if she is not singing quite up to her standard this season—if she has her arias pitched a tone lower, and if she occasionally sings sharp—she is, after all, 'the only Patti!'

MR. ERNEST INGERSOLL, referring to my paragraph about a trivial slip in his 'Country Cousins,' printed a few weeks since, sends me this note:—I was quite as much amused as chagrined by your witty exposure of my poor Nereids. I knew quite as well as anybody, long before penning that paragraph, that the Nereid was a sea-nymph and that the Dryad was the 'party' I had in mind. It was not a matter of ignorance at all. Yet what was probably a true 'slip of the pen' to begin with, once down remained unnoticed through manuscript revision, through the scrutiny and proof-reading of its publication as an article in *The Century*, and through the several re-readings incident to making the book, and would perhaps never have been discovered by me, while elsewhere I would use the name aright. Is this a sort of 'heterophemy?' I could tell you of another similar case, but this one I found out for myself. In my 'Friends Worth Knowing,' p. 91, you may find the robin set down as an example among well-known birds which *walk*. Nothing could be more erroneous; the *crow* was the familiar bird I had it in mind to mention, but the equally familiar robin got his name down instead and the change was never noticed till too late. Is this thing psychological, or mechanical, or simply carelessness? However, I'm glad the weakness you found was in my mythology rather than in my natural history.

'THE LOUNGER's indictment of Mr. Froude a few weeks since,' writes E. A. W. of New Haven, 'recalls a misquotation from a lesser poet which I chanced upon last summer, and fancied almost too droll for innocent blundering. Still, as "Beneventura," by Emma Marshall, whatever else it may be, is utterly guiltless of humor, it would seem as if Lewis Carroll must have corrected the proof, when we find one of the chapter-mottos reading thus:

Alas, how easily things go wrong!
A sigh too much and a *tint* too strong,
And there follows a *mess*, and no end of pain,
And life is never the same again.

All of which is duly credited to MacDonald, who wrote, in 'Phantastes':

Alas, how easily things go wrong!
A sigh too much or a kiss too strong,
And there follows a mist and a sweeping rain,
And life is never the same again.

A Note on the Mocking-Bird.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE CRITIC :

May we 'solid Southerners' say a word or two in confirmation of what Mr. Maurice Thompson brings forward in his *Atlantic* paper on the merits of the mocking-bird? In his charming account of the bird—the Shakspeare of birds—he does not go a whit too far, even in the opinion of one who has heard the nightingale, and heard her in all her glory, in May-time, on the banks of the Rhine. You know how wonderfully fluent and rich the German nightingales are, with their heavy *contralto* voices? Well, it is my honest opinion that philomel will not compare with the singer of the South in sweetness, versatility, passion, or lyrical beauty. The mocking-bird—better, the *echo*-bird, with a voice compounded of all sweet sounds, as the blossom of the Chinese olive is compounded of all sweet scents—is a pure lyrist; its throat is a lyre—æolian, capricious, many-stringed; as its scientific name suggests, it is a polyglot mime, a bird linguist, a feathered Mezzofanti singing all the bird languages; yet, over and above all this, with a something of its own that cannot be described. The nightingale, on the other hand, struck me as an epical poet among birds, full of the German *Sehnsucht*, full of fire and tunefulness, but monotonous. Its few notes are marvellously rich; but they are to the mocking-bird's what the tortoise-shell of Hermes was before it fell into the hands of Apollo. Mr. Thompson does not notice the well-authenticated fact that the mother mocking-bird will poison one of its young if it can get to it when confined in a cage. But every Southerner—'solid' or not—will thank Mr. Thompson for his essay, in which our national bird appears *imprimé tout vif*, as Figaro says.

LEXINGTON, VA., Dec. 5, 1884. JAMES A. HARRISON.

The Light That is Felt.

[John Greenleaf Whittier, in *St. Nicholas*.]

A TENDER child of summers three,
Seeking her little bed at night,
Paused on the dark stair timidly.
'Oh, mother! Take my hand,' said she,
And then the dark will all be light.'

We older children grope our way
From dark behind to dark before;
And only when our hands we lay,
Dear Lord, in Thine, the night is day
And there is darkness nevermore.

Reach downward to the sunless days
Wherein our guides are blind as we,
And faith is small and hope delays;
Take Thou the hands of prayer we raise,
And let us feel the light of Thee!

A Humble Remonstrance.

[Robert Louis Stevenson, in *Longman's Magazine*.]

WE have recently enjoyed a quite peculiar pleasure: hearing, in some detail, the opinions about the art they practice of Mr. Walter Besant and Mr. Henry James; two men certainly of very different calibre: Mr. James so precise of outline, so cunning of fence, so scrupulous of finish, and Mr. Besant so genial, so friendly, with so persuasive and humorous a vein of whim: Mr. James the very type of the deliberate artist, Mr. Besant the impersonation of good nature. That such doctors should differ will excite no great surprise; but one point in which they seem to agree fills me, I confess, with wonder. For they are both content to talk about the 'art of fiction'; and Mr. Besant, waxing exceedingly bold, goes on to oppose this so-called 'art of fiction' to the 'art of poetry.' By the art of poetry he can mean nothing but the art of verse, an art of handicraft, and only comparable with the art of prose. For that heat and height of sane emotion which we agree to call by the name of poetry, is but a libertine and vagrant quality; present, at times, in any art, more often absent from them all; too seldom present in the prose novel,

too frequently absent from the ode and epic. Fiction is in the same case; it is no substantive art, but an element which enters largely into all the arts but architecture. Homer, Wordsworth, Phidias, Hogarth, and Salvini, all deal in fiction; and yet I do not suppose that either Hogarth or Salvini, to mention but these two, entered in any degree into the scope of Mr. Besant's interesting lecture or Mr. James's charming essay. The art of fiction, then, regarded as a definition, is both too ample and too scanty. Let me suggest another; let me suggest that what both Mr. James and Mr. Besant had in view was neither more nor less than the art of narrative.

But Mr. Besant is anxious to speak solely of 'the modern English novel,' the stay and bread-winner of Mr. Mudie; and in the author of the most pleasing novel on that roll, 'All Sorts and Conditions of Men,' the desire is natural enough. I can conceive then, that he would hasten to propose two additions, and read thus: the art of *fictitious narrative in prose*.

Now the fact of the existence of the modern English novel is not to be denied; materially, with its three volumes, leaded type, and gilded lettering, it is easily distinguishable from other forms of literature; but to talk at all fruitfully of any branch of art, it is needful to build our definitions on some more fundamental ground than binding. Why, then, are we to add 'in prose'? The 'Odyssey' appears to me among the best of romances; the 'Lady of the Lake' to stand high in the second order; and Chaucer's tales and prologues to contain more of the matter and art of the modern English novel than the whole treasury of Mr. Mudie. Whether a narrative be written in blank verse or the Spenserian stanza, in the long period of Gibbon or the chipped phrase of Charles Reade, the principles of the art of narrative must be equally observed. The choice of a noble and swelling style in prose affects the problem of narration in the same way, if not to the same degree, as the choice of measured verse; for both imply a closer synthesis of events, a higher key of dialogue, and a more picked and stately strain of words. If you are to refuse 'Don Juan,' it is hard to see why you should include 'Zanoni' or (to bracket works of very different value) the 'Scarlet Letter'; and by what discrimination are you to open your doors to the 'Pilgrim's Progress' and close them on the 'Faery Queen'? To bring things closer home, I will here propound to Mr. Besant a conundrum. A narrative called 'Paradise Lost' was written in English verse by one John Milton; what was it then? It was next translated by Chateaubriand into French prose; and what was it then? Lastly, the French translation was, by some inspired compatriot of George Gilfillan (and of mine), turned bodily into an English novel; and, in the name of clearness, what was it then?

But, once more, why should we add 'fictitious'? The reason why is obvious. The reason why not, if something more recon-dite, does not want for weight. The art of narrative, in fact, is the same, whether it is applied to the selection and illustration of a real series of events or of an imaginary series. Boswell's 'Life of Johnson' (a work of cunning and inimitable art) owes its success to the same technical manœuvres as (let us say) 'Tom Jones': the clear conception of certain characters of man, the choice and presentation of certain incidents out of a great number that offered, and the invention (yes, invention) and preservation of a certain key in dialogue. In which these things are done with the more art—in which with the greater air of nature—readers will differently judge. Boswell's is, indeed, a very special case, and almost a generic; but it is not only in Boswell, it is in every biography with any salt of life, it is in every history where events and men, rather than ideas, are presented—in Tacitus, in Carlyle, in Michelet, in Macaulay—that the novelist will find many of his own methods most conspicuously and adroitly handled. He will find besides that he, who is free—who has the right to invent or steal a missing incident, who has the right, more precious still, of wholesale omission—is frequently defeated, and, with all his advantages, leaves a less strong impression of reality and passion. Mr. James utters his mind with a becoming fervor on the sanctity of truth to the novelist; on a more careful examination truth will seem a word of very debatable propriety, not only for the labors of the novelist, but for those of the historian. No art—to use the daring phrase of Mr. James—can successfully 'compete with life'; and the art that does so is condemned to perish *montibus aviiis*. Life goes before us, infinite in complication; attended by the most various and surprising meteors; appealing at once to the eye, to the ear, to the mind—the seat of wonder, to the touch—so thrillingly delicate, and to the belly—so imperious when starved. It combines and employs in its manifestation the method and material, not of one art only, but of all the arts. Music is but an arbitrary trifling with a few of life's majestic chords; painting is but a

shadow of its gorgeous pageantry of light and color; literature does but drily indicate that wealth of incident, of moral obligation, of virtue, vice, action, rapture, and agony, with which it teems. To 'compete with life,' whose sun we cannot look upon, whose passions and diseases waste and slay us—to compete with the flavor of wine, the beauty of the dawn, the scorching of fire, the bitterness of death and separation—here is, indeed, a projected escalade of heaven; here are, indeed, labors for a Hercules in a dress coat, armed with a pen and a dictionary to depict the passions, armed with a tube of superior flake-white to paint the portrait of the insufferable sun. No art is true in this sense: none can 'compete with life': not even history, built indeed of indisputable facts, but these facts robbed of their vivacity and sting; so that even when we read of the sack of a city or the fall of an empire, we are surprised, and justly commend the author's talent, if our pulse be quickened. And mark, for a last differentia, that this quickening of the pulse is, in almost every case, purely agreeable; that these phantom reproductions of experience, even at their most acute, convey decided pleasure; while experience itself, in the cockpit of life, can torture and slay.

What, then, is the object, what the method, of an art, and what the source of its power? The whole secret is that no art does 'compete with life.' Man's one method, whether he reasons or creates, is to half-shut his eyes against the dazzle and confusion of reality. The arts, like arithmetic and geometry, turn away their eyes from the gross, colored, and mobile nature at our feet, and regard instead a certain figmentary abstraction. Geometry will tell us of a circle, a thing never seen in nature; asked about a green circle or an iron circle, it lays its hand upon its mouth. So with the arts. Painting, ruefully comparing sunshine and flake-white, gives up truth of color, as it had already given up relief and movement; and instead of vying with nature, arranges a scheme of harmonious tints. Literature, above all in its most typical mood, the mood of narrative, similarly flees the direct challenge and pursues instead an independent and creative aim. So far as it imitates at all, it imitates not life but speech: not the facts of human destiny, but the emphasis and the suppressions with which the human actor tells of them. The real art that dealt with life directly was that of the first men who told their stories round the savage camp-fire. Our art is occupied, and bound to be occupied, not so much in making stories true as in making them typical; not so much in capturing the lineaments of each fact, as in marshalling all of them toward a common end. For the welter of impressions, all forcible but all discrete, which life presents, it substitutes a certain artificial series of impressions, all indeed most feebly represented, but all aiming at the same effect, all eloquent of the same idea, all chiming together like consonant notes in music or like the graduated tints in a good picture. From all its chapters, from all its pages, from all its sentences, the well-written novel echoes and re-echoes its one creative and controlling thought; to this must every incident and character contribute; the style must have been pitched in unison with this; and if there is anywhere a word that looks another way, the book would be stronger, clearer, and (I had almost said) fuller without it. Life is monstrous, infinite, illogical, abrupt, and poignant; a work of art, in comparison, is neat, finite, self-contained, rational, flowing, and emasculate. Life imposes by brute energy, like inarticulate thunder; art catches the ear, among the far louder noises of experience, like an air artificially made by a discreet musician. A proposition of geometry does not compete with life; and a proposition of geometry is a fair and luminous parallel for a work of art. Both are reasonable, both untrue to the crude fact; both inhere in nature, neither represents it. The novel which is a work of art exists, not by its resemblances to life, which are forced and material, as a shoe must still consist of leather, but by its immeasurable difference from life, which is designed and significant, and is both the method and the meaning of the work.

The life of man is not the subject of novels, but the inexhaustible magazine from which subjects are to be selected; the name of these is legion; and with each new subject—for here again I must differ by the whole width of heaven from Mr. James—the true artist will vary his method and change the point of attack. That which was in one case an excellence, will become a defect in another; what was the making of one book, will in the next be impertinent or dull. First each novel, and then each class of novels, exists by and for itself. I will take, for instance, three main classes, which are fairly distinct: first, the novel of adventure, which appeals to certain almost sensual and quite illogical tendencies in man; second, the novel of character, which appeals to our intellectual appreciation of man's foibles and min-

gled and inconstant motives; and third, the dramatic novel, which deals with the same stuff as the serious theatre, and appeals to our emotional nature and moral judgment.

And first for the novel of adventure. Mr James refers, with singular generosity of praise, to a little book about a quest for hidden treasure; but he lets fall, by the way, some rather startling words. In this book he misses what he calls the 'immense luxury' of being able to quarrel with his author. The luxury, to most of us, is to lay by our judgment, to be submerged by the tale as by a billow, and only to awake, and begin to distinguish and find fault, when the piece is over and the volume laid aside. Still more remarkable is Mr. James's reason. He cannot criticize the author, as he goes, 'because,' says he, comparing it with another work, '*I have been a child, but I have never been on a quest for buried treasures.*' Here is, indeed, a wilful paradox; for if he has never been on a quest for buried treasure, it can be demonstrated that he has never been a child. There never was a child (unless Master James) but has hunted gold, and been a pirate, and a military commander, and a bandit of the mountains; but has fought, and suffered shipwreck and prison, and imbrued its little hands in gore, and gallantly retrieved the lost battle, and triumphantly protected innocence and beauty. Elsewhere in his essay Mr. James has protested with excellent reason against too narrow a conception of experience; for the born artist, he contends, the 'faintest hints of life' are converted into revelations; and it will be found true, I believe, in a majority of cases, that the artist writes with more gusto and effect of those things which he has only wished to do, than of those which he has done. Desire is a wonderful telescope, and Pisgah the best observatory. Now, while it is true that neither Mr. James nor the author of the work in question has ever, in the fleshly sense, gone questing after gold, it is probable that both have ardently desired and fondly imagined the details of such a life in youthful day-dreams; and the author, counting upon that, and well aware (cunning and low-minded man!) that this class of interest, having been frequently treated, finds a readily accessible and beaten road to the sympathies of the reader, addressed himself throughout to the building up and circumstantiation of this boyish dream. Character to the boy is a sealed book; for him, a pirate is a beard in wide trousers and literally bristling with pistols. The author, for the sake of circumstantiation and because he was himself more or less grown up, admitted character, within certain limits, into his design; but only within certain limits. Had the same puppets figured in a scheme of another sort, they had been drawn to very different purpose; for in this elementary novel of adventure, the characters need to be presented with but one class of qualities—the warlike and formidable. So as they appear insidious in deceit and fatal in the combat, they have served their end. Danger is the matter with which this class of novel deals; fear, the passion with which it idly trifles; and the characters are portrayed only so far as they realize the sense of danger and provoke the sympathy of fear. To add more traits, to be too clever, to start the hare of moral or intellectual interest while we are running the fox of material interest, is not to enrich but to stultify our tale. The stupid reader will only be offended, and the clever reader lose the scent.

The novel of character has this difference from all others: that it requires no coherency of plot, and for this reason, as in the case of 'Gil Blas,' it is sometimes called the novel of adventure. It turns on the humors of the persons represented; these are, to be sure, embodied in incidents, but the incidents themselves, being tributary, need not march in a progression; and the characters may be statically shown. As they enter, so they may go out; they must be consistent, but they need not grow. Here Mr. James will recognize the note of much of his own work: he treats, for the most part, the statics of character, studying it at rest or only gently moved; and, with his usual delicate and just artistic instinct, he avoids those stronger passions which would deform the attitudes he loves to study, and change his sitters from the humorists of ordinary life to the brute forces and bare types of more emotional moments. In his recent 'Author of "Beltraffio,"' so just in conception, so nimble and neat in workmanship, strong passion is indeed employed; but observe that it is not displayed. Even in the heroine the working of the passion is suppressed; and the great struggle, the true tragedy, the *scène-à-faire*, passes unseen behind the panels of a locked door. The delectable invention of the young visitor is introduced, consciously or not, to this end: that Mr. James, true to his method, might avoid the scene of passion. I trust no reader will suppose me guilty of undervaluing this little masterpiece. I mean merely that it belongs to one marked class of novel, and that it would have been very differently conceived and treated

had it belonged to that other marked class, of which I now proceed to speak.

I take pleasure in calling the dramatic novel by that name, because it enables me to point out by the way a strange and peculiarly English misconception. It is sometimes supposed that the drama consists of incident. It consists of passion, which gives the actor his opportunity; and that passion must progressively increase, or the actor, as the piece proceeded, would be unable to carry the audience from a lower to a higher pitch of interest and emotion. A good serious play must therefore be founded on one of the passionate *crucies* of life, where duty and inclination come nobly to the grapple; and the same is true of what I call, for that reason, the dramatic novel. I will instance a few worthy specimens, all of our own day and language: Meredith's 'Rhoda Fleming,' that wonderful and painful book, long out of print and hunted for at bookstalls like an Aldine; Hardy's 'Pair of Blue Eyes'; and two of Charles Reade's, 'Griffith Gaunt' and the 'Double Marriage,' originally called 'White Lies' and founded (by an accident quaintly favorable to my nomenclature) on a play by Maquet, the partner of the great Dumas. In this kind of novel the closed door of the 'Author of "Beltraffio"' must be broken open; passion must appear upon the scene and utter its last word; passion is the be-all and the end-all, the plot and the solution, the protagonist and the *deus ex machina* in one. The characters may come anyhow upon the stage: we do not care; the point is, that, before they leave it, they shall become transfigured and raised out of themselves by passion. It may be part of the design to draw them with detail; to depict a full-length character, and then behold it melt and change in the furnace of emotion. But there is no obligation of the sort; nice portraiture is not required; and we are content to accept mere abstract types, so they be strongly and sincerely moved. A novel of this class may be even great, and yet contain no individual figure; it may be great, because it displays the workings of the perturbed heart and the impersonal utterance of passion; and with an artist of the second class it is, indeed, even more likely to be great, when the issue has thus been narrowed and the whole force of the writer's mind directed to passion alone. Cleverness again, which has its fair field in the novel of character, is debarred all entry upon this more solemn theatre. A far-fetched motive, an ingenious evasion of the issue, a witty instead of a passionate turn, offend us like an insincerity. All should be plain, all straightforward to the end. Hence it is that, in 'Rhoda Fleming,' Mrs. Lovel raises such resentment in the reader; her motives are too flimsy, her ways are too equivocal, for the weight and strength of her surroundings. Hence the hot indignation of the reader when Balzac, after having begun the 'Duchesse de Langeais' in terms of strong if somewhat swollen passion, cuts the knot by the derangement of the hero's clock. Such personages and incidents belong to the novel of character; they are out of place in the high society of the passions; when the passions are introduced in art at their full height, we look to see them, not baffled and impotently striving, as in life, but towering above circumstance and acting substitutes for fate.

And here I can imagine Mr. James, with his lucid sense, to intervene. To much of what I have said he would apparently demur; in much he would, somewhat impatiently, acquiesce. It may be true; but it is not what he desired to say or to hear said. He spoke of the finished picture and its worth when done; I, of the brushes, the palette, and the north light. He uttered his views in the tone and for the ear of good society; I, with the emphasis and technicalities of the obtrusive student. But the point, I may reply, is not merely to amuse the public, but to offer helpful advice to the young writer. And the young writer will not so much be helped by genial pictures of what an art may aspire to at its highest, as by a true idea of what it must be on the lowest terms. The best that we can say to him is this: Let him choose a motive, whether of character or passion; carefully construct his plot so that every incident is an illustration of the motive and every property employed shall bear to it a near relation of congruity or contrast; avoid a sub-plot, unless, as sometimes in Shakspeare, the sub-plot be a reversion or complement of the main intrigue; suffer not his style to flag below the level of argument; pitch the key of conversation, not with any thought of how men talk in parlors, but with a single eye to the degree of passion he may be called on to express; and allow neither himself in the narrative nor any character in the course of the dialogue, to utter one sentence that is not part and parcel of the business of the story or the discussion of the problem involved. Let him not regret if this shortens his book; it will be better so; for to add irrelevant matter is not to lengthen but to bury. Let him not mind if he miss a thousand qualities, so that he keeps unflinchingly in pursuit of the one he has chosen. Let him not

care particularly if he miss the tone of conversation, the pungent material detail of the day's manners, the reproduction of the atmosphere and the environment. These elements are not essential: a novel may be excellent, and yet have none of them; a passion or a character is so much the better depicted as it rises clearer from material circumstance. In this age of the particular, let him remember the ages of the abstract, the great books of the past, the brave men that lived before Shakspeare and before Balzac. And as the root of the whole matter, let him bear in mind that his novel is not a transcript of life, to be judged by its exactitude; but a simplification of some side or point of life, to stand or fall by its significant simplicity. For although, in great men, working upon great motives, what we observe and admire is often their complexity, yet underneath appearances the truth remains unchanged: that simplification was their method, and that simplicity is their excellence.

Current Criticism

BADLY TAUGHT:—Nobody will dispute that Harvard and Yale are the two chief American colleges, and if there is anything that we have a right to expect from them, it is that their students should be carefully instructed in the art of expressing their ideas elegantly and clearly in the English language. But what shall we say when the representatives of these two ancient institutions of learning in the Intercollegiate Football Association deliberately adopt a declaration like the following: 'That the association disapprove of Princeton's action toward the referee, and extend a vote of thanks to Mr. Appleton for refereeing the game in a proper and dignified way.' What an atrocious word is this verb 'refereeing!' Where is the authority for its invention? By what right do the delegates of Harvard and Yale force such a verb into the vocabulary of the vernacular? The faculty in each of these colleges ought to call the offending delegates before them, and, after due trial and conviction, they should be expelled, or at least rusticated for their crime.—*The Sun*.

A WEST-VIRGINIAN'S COMPLEXION:—In your issue of September 27th, 1884, in the review of a book, 'Ancient and Modern Britons,' notice is drawn to the dark complexion of the early border peoples. My experience during three years' intercourse with the inhabitants of the Western slope of the Appalachians, is that the wildest natives are dark. The Eastern backbone from Pennsylvania to Florida is still in the occupation of the descendants of the earliest settlers,—hunters and outlaws. Too poor to own negroes, there is no taint of colored blood, and the Indians have long ago vanished. Still, many families are dark,—sallow complexion, straight, coarse, black hair, little or no beard, and a noiseless, slouching gait. Certainly, there is no Gipsy blood here; but there have been generations of out-door liveries, looking for sustenance to the hunt and wild herbs. I believe such a course of life affects even the individual. Last spring, after a protracted stay with the Seminole Indians along the edge of the Everglades, my hair was dark and lank, whilst the tan of years of outdoor day-work had given place to a sallow olive-brown. Since my return to regular food and good shelter, my hair holds itself up like a white man's. I offer these remarks as I have spent a long period amid these little-known sections.—*G. Darbishire, in The Spectator*.

NEW YORK'S FREE LIBRARY:—The substantial growth of the New York Free Circulating Library since its modest beginning, four years ago, has made it clear that its founders and promoters have already laid the cornerstone of the city's future great free library, and of all the institutions for popular pleasure and profit which we have or desire there is none more worthy of fostering and encouragement. It is not too much to say, perhaps, that next to a clean administration of its affairs a great free circulating library is the city's chief lack. The library in Bond street does not yet boast of a large collection, but its books are in constant use by a very considerable number of persons, and its total circulation for the last year was close upon 100,000. It needs money and deserves it. Mr. Ottendorfer's gift of a branch library in Second Avenue, which will be formally opened on Saturday, has extended its usefulness, and his munificent example is well worthy the imitation of others who have the welfare of the city at heart. But the library needs for its proper development and maintenance more money than it is likely to receive from private donations. Boston's public library is in a large part supported by an annual appropriation from the city. We have often expressed the opinion that such a policy should be adopted here.—*The New York Times*.

SWINBURNE AS A POLITICIAN:—This brings us naturally to the political poems, of which we shall say but little, if only for the reason, as has been hinted, that we seem to be the main cause of Mr. Swinburne's anguish. It might have been thought that no one of sufficient intelligence to understand its terms would have dissented from the proposition that an assembly which for eight hundred years has had a main, for more than half the time the main, share in governing England, and which during that period has drawn into itself most of the chief representatives of the political virtues—Wisdom and Valor—which England could furnish, possesses an accumulated treasure of dignity that no individual, however great, could hope to equal. Mr. Swinburne thinks otherwise, and in three sonnets, which he wrote apparently *stans pede in uno*, and several other poems, calls us, and those who agree with us, 'worshippers of corn and oil and wine,' 'lackeys,' 'souls bestial by birth,'

Penmen that yearn as they turn on their pallet
For the place or the pence of a peer or a valet,

etc. As a matter of fact, the chief penman we ever heard of who slept on a pallet was M. Victor Hugo. He also, oddly enough, once occupied the place of a peer, but Mr. Swinburne can hardly mean him. However, it skills little talking politics with Mr. Swinburne.—*The Saturday Review*.

AMERICAN NOVELS.—The first and most striking trait in these books is the extraordinary respect for class distinction, position, gentility and money among the characters described, with scarcely an exception. The highest feather in a girl's cap is to have refused a 'British nobleman,' or, at least, one of the Boston 'aristocrats.' Next comes the value set upon dress. The importance of the 'gown' question can hardly be imagined by the European mind. A French heroine is of course *bien mise*, and her *chaussure* is probably insisted on—the *petites mules*, or the *bas bien tirés*. An English girl must be picturesque in her attire and her clothes must be becoming; but to say that her gowns came from Paris would not enhance her charms in the eyes of the readers, who would probably consider her very absurd for her pains. A wild civility

Doth more bewitch me than where art
Is too precise in every part.

There is not much trace of Herrick, however, in the United States ideals. A list of Miss Lydia Blood's gowns, as given by so clever a man as Mr. Howells, might be drawn up for the advantage of milliners. Miss Daisy Miller's flounces, and the many buttons of her gloves, are among the chief points of her portrait by Mr. James.—*The Contemporary Review*.

Notes

THE January number of *Harper's Magazine* will be conspicuous for the beginning of two serials—'East Angels,' by Miss Woolson, and an anonymous story—'At the Red Grove.' Miss Woolson's serial will not be illustrated; the other—a humorous tale—will be enlivened by the pencils of several artists. In this number an important series of illustrated articles on Great Industries is begun. The opening article—'A Pair of Shoes'—inducts us into the mysteries of shoemaking. The next paper will treat of silk-manufacturing. The idea of this series is a capital one, not only because it interests the thousands of people engaged in these industries, but because it gives the general public a better knowledge of the manufacturing interests of the country.

—Lady Brassey's new book, 'In the Trades, the Tropics and the Roaring Forties,' is to be published in a few days by Henry Holt & Co.

—Scribner & Welford publish an interesting book on 'The Pictorial Press: its Origin and Progress,' by Mason Jackson. It is curious to trace the beginning of this branch of book-making and journalism from the rough-hewn blocks of the Sixteenth to the artistic engravings of the Nineteenth Century.

—Missals and Books of Hours are the special delight of bibliophiles, and they have had a rich treat, recently, at the rooms of the Grolier Club, where brightly colored and gilded vellum covered the walls and filled about a dozen cases. The specimens shown ranged in size from what may perhaps be styled pocket editions to huge sheets, each containing a few notes of music large enough to be read by a whole choir at once, and to hold the attention in spite of the portraits of saints and the flowers and scrolls by which they were surrounded. The subject matter varied from that of a devotional book to a doctor's diploma, but all were on vellum and all showed the same brilliant coloring in emerald green, carmine, ultramarine and vermilion.

Some Persian books of poems, in their ancient stamped leather covers, were as interesting as any; and among the most artistic of the exhibits must be mentioned a few Japanese illustrated manuscripts—one especially, a history of Japan, the water-color illustrations in which showed wonderful power of dramatic composition and of design.

—A discussion of the Greek question which should be memorable will take place in this city next month. On the evening of Tuesday, February 24, President Eliot will address the Nineteenth Century Club on the important step lately taken by Harvard College in making the study of the classics elective to students in all classes. The debate following the exposition of President Eliot's views will be participated in by President Porter of Yale and President McCosh of Princeton.

—'The Children-Out-of-Doors'—a book of verses by two in one home—is announced for immediate publication by Robert Clarke & Co. It is to be issued anonymously, but the authorship is an open secret. In other words, the publishers themselves announce it to be the work of 'John James Piatt, United States Consul at Cork, Ireland, and his gifted wife, Mrs. S. M. B. Piatt.'

—The October numbers of the *Nuova Antologia* are, as usual, full and interesting. The fates of Madame Letitia and her daughter Pauline Bonaparte (Princess Borghese) form the subject of a very agreeable study in one of these numbers; and in the other, many newly discovered letters of Metastasio, that *spirituel* Italian poet-abbé of the last century, see the light for the first time. There is also an original study of Italian malaria which will be found full of just observations. Arsenic, we see from this paper, is now used extensively in infected districts as an anti-malarial remedy, though the juice of boiled lemons is one of the favorite and most effective remedies of the Italian peasantry.

—'An Actor's Tour, or Seventy Thousand Miles with Shakespeare' is the rather striking name of a book recording Mr. Daniel E. Bandmann's experiences on a tour, lasting three and a half years, through Australia, New Zealand, India, Ceylon, China, and the Hawaiian Islands. It has been edited by Bernard Gisby, and is published by Cupples, Upham & Co.

—'The Shakespearean Referee,' a cyclopædia of four thousand two hundred words, obsolete and modern, occurring in the plays of Shakespeare, with original and other explanations, commentaries, annotations, etymologies, etc., derived from a great variety of authentic sources, to which are added translations of all the Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish words occurring in the plays, by J. H. Siddons, will be published in January by James Anglim & Co., of Washington.

—'Ogilvie's Handy Book' is a handy book in fact as well as in name—a very handy book, indeed, containing in admirably compact form a great deal of useful information on a wide variety of subjects—geographical, political, economical, musical, artistic, medical, mythological and literary. It is bound in stiff paper covers, and sold cheaply.

—The paragraph entitled 'Clews to Thackeray's Characters,' quoted in last week's Current Criticism, contained references to the Corn of Harmony, a song called 'The Baby-Snatcher,' and a nobleman known as Lord Colchicm. Readers of Thackeray need hardly be reminded that the Cave of Harmony, 'The Body-Snatcher' and my Lord Colchicm were the persons and things whose titular disguises the proof-reader failed to strip off.

—Mr. W. E. Norris, the author of 'Matrimony' and other engaging tales, has written a new novel, 'Adrian Vidal,' which will run as a serial in *Harper's Weekly*, beginning with the January number.

—The most valuable paper in *Christian Thought* for November and December is Professor Faraday's lecture on 'The Education of the Judgment,' reprinted from 'Modern Culture' in accordance with Dr. Deems' intention 'of improving the space left after inserting the Lectures before the American Institute, by republishing the ablest productions of thinkers abroad.'

—The exhibition of Christmas card designs lately held at Riechard's in Fifth Avenue is better than any similar exhibition before held. It includes drawings by Messrs. Blashfield, Dewing, and Beckwith, and Miss Rosina Emmett, which are all that such designs should be—well composed, richly colored, and decorative in treatment. Other good drawings were by Leon and Percy Moran, Douglass Volk and Will H. Low. The designs that have been awarded prizes, on the score of their prospective popularity alone, are by Messrs. Weldon, Low, Dielman, and T. Moran.

— Dr. Baird's 'History of the Huguenot Emigration to America,' which was announced by Dodd, Mead & Co. for publication before the Holidays, will necessarily be delayed till the early part of next year.

— *Babyhood* makes its first appearance in an attractive form as to size, shape, binding and typography, and is filled with reading matter that cannot fail to edify young mothers and mothers-in-law. Its tone is scientific and practical, and as sensible as might be expected from the fact that Marion Harland is a liberal contributor to its columns. We are struck by an interesting suggestion in its Notes and News—namely, that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children employ an inspector to guard against the neglect and ill-treatment of infants by nurses who resort to Central Park to flirt with the Park Police or other beaux.

— Mr. Foster's *Monthly Reference Lists* for December is devoted to 'Buchanan's Administration.'

— The following cablegram was printed in last Wednesday's papers:—Lord Tennyson's new drama, 'Thomas à Becket,' which has just appeared, is dedicated to Earl Selborne, the Lord High Chancellor. In the preface, the poet says the work is not intended in its present form to meet the exigencies of the modern theatre. The drama is too long for acting. The two principal scenes are the visit of Queen Eleanor to Rosamond and the murder of Becket. Rosamond is summoned to choose death by poison or stabbing, and rejects both. The Queen is then about to stab her, when Becket appears upon the scene in time to prevent the deed. He upbraids the Queen and advises her to retire to a convent. Rosamond is filled with gratitude for her rescue, and attempts to rescue Becket from the men who are sworn to murder him. After Becket has been murdered Rosamond is found kneeling over his corpse in the cathedral.

— Mr. Matthew Arnold's daughter, who accompanied the distinguished poet and critic on his recent visit to America, and made many friends on this side of the water, was married in London last Tuesday to Mr. F. W. Whitridge of this city.

— We have received from Taunton, Mass., the Second Supplement to the Catalogue of the Public Library of that city.

— 'Whether the proposed plan' (for a new Congressional Library) 'is the best possible or not,' says *The Library Journal*, 'it is no slight recommendation that it has satisfied the Librarian of Congress in many years' brooding over it.'

— In the latest numbers of *L'Art* (J. W. Bouton) Holbein continues to be the leading topic. Reproductions of some of his most characteristic portraits and drawings are given. Other interesting articles are on 'Le Chateau Féodal,' and on Pierre Corneille. The etchings are below the average.

— The following circular, issued last October, sets forth the purpose of the Baconian Society in forming the association so named.

The aim of this Society is to elucidate the real character, position, and genius of Francis Bacon, as philosopher, lawyer, essayist and poet. The task which the Society will endeavor to perform, on the strictest principles of scientific investigation, is to inquire what was the influence of Bacon on the spirit of his own and succeeding times?—what the tendencies and results of his writings? It is proposed to carry out these objects by means of discussions, in duly appointed meetings, and by the publication of pamphlets, or of a magazine which may enable students of all shades of opinion to give currency to their thoughts and studies. The Society also propose, when their funds are sufficient for that purpose, to print sundry collections of letters, papers and books, hitherto unpublished, or out of print, such as the Letters of Lady Anne Bacon, of her son Anthony, and of Sir Tobie Matthew, Bacon's Orders in Chancery, Birch's 'Court of James I,' &c. It is further desired to institute a searching comparison between the works generally acknowledged to be by Bacon, and contemporary works not generally attributed to him, or of which he was *not* the author. By this means it is hoped: (1) To ascertain how much English Language and Literature owe to Bacon. (2) To come to some conclusion as to the supposed relation between Bacon and the Shakspearean Poems and Dramas. Co-operation is requested not only from those living within reach of London, but from distant friends and students, as Honorary and Corresponding Members; and it is expected that the interests in the Society's Meetings will be enhanced by communications from those who are pursuing the same studies, residing in America, Germany, the Colonies, India and other parts. Any suggestions regarding the organization, aims and constitution of this Society will be thankfully received and fully considered.

A Shakspearean who has read this prospectus comments upon it in these terms: 'No society with aims so catholic in the cause of literature as this appears to be can help doing good—to the printers. But, seriously, all societies like this help in the

general cause of literature. Only let a very warning finger be held up to them against encroaching on the domain of Shakspeare, which already lies in full possession of every mortal heart. The error which is continually made by Shakspeare scholars and students is that they claim Shakspeare for their own, and say that he is this or that, or meant this or t'other. Shakspeare belongs to every man who sits in front of the foot-lights, and what his heart and brain take in and assimilate, that Shakspeare says to him; and thereby Shakspeare reigns, by the grace of God, sovereign over us all, more royally than any anointed king, and through the thick hedge of divinity around him, the treason which the Society hints at "can but peep to what it would."'

The Free Parliament

[Communications must be accompanied with the name and address of the correspondent, not necessarily for publication. Correspondents answering or referring to any question are requested to give the number of the question for convenience of reference.]

QUESTIONS.

No. 840.—According to which calendar is the chronology in the current historical works, for events occurring before the introduction of the Gregorian Calendar?

ORTO F. KUSS.

[Historians use the dates that belong to the age of which they treat, and which, of course, are those which they find in the documents they consult in their researches. If there is ever any departure from this rule, it is accompanied by a parenthetical statement of the fact (just as we see Russian dates in our own time often cited with the equivalent Gregorian date in parenthesis). *Per contra*, in the old historians the dates given cannot always be strictly relied on,—either because of original error, or because of mistakes in copying or in proof-reading. Thus, we have found in Friessart and Monstrelet, instances in which the day of the week and day of the month are both given, but in which the coincidence is not true in either Calendar. Of course these old dates were old style dates, and no modern editor would pervert history by altering them.]

No. 841.—What was the 'good news' brought from Ghent to Aix?
BROOKLYN, N. Y. H.

No. 842.—A series of stories was projected some years since under the general title of *The Cheveley Novels*. The first of the series—'A Modern Minister'—appeared anonymously in *Harper's Weekly*, or *Basar*, as a serial. Who wrote the novel in question? and what has become of the project?

DENVER, COLO.

C. B. JR.

[We believe 'A Modern Minister,' was the only novel issued in this series; but more definite information can doubtless be obtained from Harper & Bros.]

No. 843.—Is there any book on the subject of the influence of women's and children's work on wages, etc.? Do any books issued by the Government furnish information concerning the laboring classes?

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

JAMES MAGEE.

[There are some passages on these subjects in Mill. The Federal Government published a book of statistics of wages, etc., some years ago, but it was poor and is now out of date. The Massachusetts Labor Bureau is the only source of information that is good for much. Its reports contain a great deal of information about the laboring classes.]

ANSWERS.

No. 806.—In a letter to *Good Literature* about two years ago, Mr. J. L. McCreery stated that he was the author of the poem beginning 'There is no death,' and that it was published, as stated by your correspondent (*THE CRITIC*, Nov. 8), in *Arthur's Magazine*, in 1868. Mr. McCreery was, at that time, a clerk in one of the Departments at Washington—I think in the Treasury. His home is at Dubuque, Iowa.

JACKSON, TENN.

L. A. PALMAR.

No. 835.—The inscription over Seward's grave is 'He was Faithful.' In 1846 William Freeman, a negro, partly of Indian blood, murdered a wealthy family living near Auburn. After a careful examination of the case, Seward became convinced that the man was insane, and morally irresponsible for the crime. In the face of public prejudice, he defended the prisoner during a trial that continued for six weeks. His address to the jury contains the following passage: 'In due time, gentlemen of the jury, when I shall have paid the debt of nature, my remains will rest here in your midst, with those of my kindred and neighbors. It is very possible they may be unhonored, neglected, spurned. But perhaps years hence, when the passion and excitement which now agitates this community shall have passed away, some wandering stranger, some lonely exile, some Indian, some Negro, may erect over them an humble stone, and write thereon this epitaph, 'HE WAS FAITHFUL.'

GOWANDA, N. Y.

ALBERT B. ROBINSON.

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